

# A CHRISTIAN REPROF AGAINST CONTENTION

Wherin is declared and manifested a just defence

of the Church, against such slanders and reproches which Sir Thomas Staresmore hath layd vpon vs in his two bookees, the first  
being 16 Questions, called A louing Answer. The second is his  
Preface and Politicke leter and behind Mr. Answorthy his

Sermon, and making a pretence by that to set us out as a  
louer, hee breatheth out his malice against vs.

Whereunto her is an Answer to a Letter written  
by Mr. Robinson, and sent to vs with the  
consent of his Church, which now  
Mr. Staresmore hath published  
to the world.

*To these things an Answer is given by A. T.*

*Now the foxes, the little foxes which destroy the vines, for our vines  
bore faire grapes. Songs 2. 15.*

*If thou stinde betwix two opinions, if the Lord bee God, follow him;  
but if Baal bee bee, then go after him. 1 Kings 18. 21.*

*He that is just in his owne cause, is just; then commeth he  
into disauer, and makering iniquitie of him. Prou. 18. 17.*



*Imprynted in the year M. DC. XXXI.*

## To the Christian Reader.

 Christian Reader, I give thee to understand: Wee haue not beene forward to publish to the world these our controwersies, and this thou maist take knowledge of, because the first of these our opposites books, hath beene in print so many yeare, being printed in the yeare 1623. being 16. Questions of their owne forming, in the which wee haue great wronge done vnto vs; yet haue wee patiently borne both that, and also that which they haue printed the last yeare against vs, vntell such time wee heard by many witnesses, that our long silence hath turned to the hinderance of the trueth, and also our owne discredit: for disers haue beene perswaded through our long silence, that wee are most in fault, or else wee would haue answered before this time; therfore for the trueth sake, & our owne defence, we thought it needfull to sett out this *Christian Reprofe* vnto these our opposites, in the which thou maist see the great injury, they doe vnto the trueth and also vnto vs, by their vnjust imputations and slanders, which they haue layd vpon vs; and althought for our felues wee could haue born these injuries in silence; yet for the trueth sake, and that none that haue a loue vnto the trueth, should be hindered or stomeble thererat, therfore needfull it is that they shold bee informed of the trueth of things as they are, in these our troubles, which by this short Answer, thou maist take knowledge of. And althought it consisteth of controveisy, which it selfe is not profitable, as some more heauenly meditations are; yet notwithstanding the Lord doth suffer such things to arise, for the approuing of such as are faithfull: 1. Cor. 11. 18. 19. & that the people of God shold not ly vpon the bed of security: Songes the 5. 5. but keepe their Christian watch, knowing that Satan seeketh too surprise vs by many meanes & wayes, 1. Peter 5. 8. Act. 20. 31. for when he can not retaine vs, in the broad wayes of the world, then will he send out the floods of his persecutions, to see if hee can swallow vs vpon it, Reu. 12. 13. but when hee is restrained frō his purpose by the Lord, then will hee seek to ouerthrow vs by his ministers whom hee seduceth, even in the Church of God, & so turne the into shape, as if they were the ministers of righteousness, 2. Cor. 15. Act. 20. 29. 30. And of these things, gentle Reader, haue wee had our portion, diuers of vs hauing beene persecuted by imprisonment, and many till death did inue, & others banished, & some loosing their right & inheritance, and must leaue it and be exiled: yet these troubles are not so dangerous, nor yet so greuious vnto a sincere conscience, as seducers which affe in the true Church; and many that haue gone through persecutions, yet haue beene overtaken by seducers, & drawne away frō the true way of God; yet this is no new thing

thing as thou mayst see by those Scripturs before alledged: and as it was with the Churches of God of old, so is it at this present time with vs, for wee hauing gone through many persecutions, so haue wee had our part of trialls by decliners & seducers: and these our opposites hath greatly troubled vs with their errour, some they hath corrupted their with, & others they haue so incumbered their mindes, that they dayly trouble vs with Contention: and to bring their porposes about, they came most Lords dayes, diuers years & troubled vs with great disturbance, many haue been the prouocations, which they haue vsed to-wards vs to prouoke vs: so that wee may truely say, that as Paule had fought with beast at Ephesus, so haue wee at Amsterdam, fought with men of a beast-like condicō, 1. Cor. 15.32. & although I could lay mor in these things, yet for the prelent I spare, to see if the Lord will worke vp their hearts by this Christian Reprofe, which if it take not effect, but that they goe on to striue against the trueth, the Lord can giue a fit opportunity that their deeds may be fully layd open, cōcerning these things in question. And now Christian Reader, take thou heed, that thou stamble not at these things to forsake the trueth, for these things ought not to bee strange vnto thee, seeing the Apostells of Christ hath fortold of these things, Act. 20.29.30. 2. Pet. 2.1.2.3. yea & themselues were troubled with such trialles, whilles they were with the Churches, Actes 15.2. Gal.2.4.5. and som preaching Christ through enuie & strife, supposing to adde more affliction too the Apostells bandes, Phil. 1.16. And hath not the Apostell told vs, that in these last dayes shall come perillous times, and that all sortes of sinnes shall abound? 2. Tim. 3.1.2.3. which should teach vs to bee more watchfull, and to judge wifly of things, and not too bee offended at the trueth, or any part thereof, for it is the trueth that maketh vs free, John 8.31.32. & yet when the Lord of glory was vpon the earth, which taught the trueth more excellent then euer did any, yet his owne Disciples went backe, & walked no more with him, stombling at his heavenly doctrine: seeing it is thus, that our corrupt nature is so soone caried a syde: how should wee deser of God, to haue the spirit of discerning, & of sincerity to walke in the trueth; & wheras wee haue been euill spoken of, too be cōtentious, and of herry spirits, with many such like reproches: But what is the cause that wee are thus reproched? is it not because wee withstand errour and sinne: and furerly, although wee are weake men, yet hearin wee follow the examples of the P̄rophetes of God. Was not Moyses the meekest man vpon the earth? yet was hee stored vp many times to great anger, because of the sinnes of the people: and who is more redy to carpe at the zeale of Gods people, then louse persons, or luke warme Christians, which are redy to lay as Ahab, 2. Cron.18.7. that when the word of God is spoken for their reprofe, they thinke it is neuer well spoken to them, well for mens esteem, wee passe not vpon it: but I turn my speech to such as are faithfull: if they haue the loue of the trueth, and if they haue a deser to keepe the Lords watch in his house, then I say to such as. Iehu sayd too Iehonadab 2. Kings 10.15. if their hertes bee vpright to the Lord, & to vs as ours is vnto them, then let them not flagger at these troubles: But come and helpe vs in our heauendy journey: for great are the hinderances by our corrupt flesh and this world, and Saran hee yielth both these to infnare vs.

But for such as are corrupt, and vnder a pretence of peace, and lowlines of  
minde, Col. 2.18. will either broch errour or plead for sinne; vnto such I say  
with Dauid, Psalm 119. 115. which saith: Depart from mee yee euill doers,  
for I will keep the commandements of my God. And this I speake not of  
singularity, but because I find that our corrupt nature hath not need of helpers  
into sinne: for wee are subiect of our selues to run into sinne dayly. And now  
Christian Reader, for as much as the diuell hath in these our dayes reviued a  
new his ancient course, teaching of men to abuse the Name of God, in taking  
vpon them to make a Couenant in their Antichristian estat, which is contrary  
to the word of God, and is a meanes, not only to insnare themselves, but also  
to draye, and insnare the people of God, which are escaped out of their  
bounds: but concerning this point, I refer thee to the 16.17.18. pages

of this booke: And now that which I haue written, I commit  
it to thy judgment, in the which I pray thee bee not par-

tiall, but read with consideration, and then with

Moyses to say to him that doeth the wrong:

Why smitest thou thy fellow.

Exodus 2.13.



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## *A Christian Reprofe against Contention.*



R. Staefm: in the beginning of his booke settet downe  
as a cause of the publishing of Mr. Answorth Sarmon:  
To be a loue token of remembrance to his Brethren to  
in kindle theire affections to prayer that scandalles of  
many yeares continuance may be remoued that are  
bares to keepe many godly wise & judicious from vs,  
wherby wee might growe to further perfection againe.

### **A N S W E R.**

**T**HAT all the people of God ought to pray both for the prosperitie  
of the trueth and for the remouing of scandalles, that none may  
be hindered from the true walking in the trueth, it is their dutye so to  
doe. **B**ut is not Mr. S. the chiefe man which is the cause of the scan-  
dell nowe in question between vs, who all though wee did bear with  
him in his errorre, and no doubtle would so haue done vntill this day,  
and allwayes hee resting in peace yet was hee so busie & vnresty that  
hee is the chiefe man that hath brought this scandall or offence, there-  
fore I aduertise him to remembare the saying of our Lord Iesus, woe  
be to the world because of offences, for it must needs be that offend-  
ces shall come, but woe to be two the man by whome they come; and  
as Mr. S. hath begone the offence: so hee is the these man that may in  
part by the acknowledging of his sinne heale the breach, and so helpe  
to take away the offences which if God vouchsafe to give unto him,  
I shall be glad and I hope all the people of the Lord also: Mr. S. in-  
structeth vs how to remoue scandal, and in the meane time hee runeth  
one swefly two intreas the scandall by publishing of his vniust wri-

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tings. Hee telleth vs that the setting out of Mr. Answorts Sarmon is his loue taken: But is this so in deed why then hath hee placed such a sweet flower betwene such bitter and poysoned earbes, placeing before it his vntrue preface, and be hind it his stoffing postscript wher by hee abuseth the word of the Lord, and belyeth his neybours as afterwards I shall shewe God willing: if this be the euent of Mr. S. loue, what maye wee thinke will the event of his hattred be: But maye not be justly feared such fruit as this that hee tocke an occasion to set out Mr. Answorts Sarmon, that so with it hee might send abroad his vnprofitable writings, and that hee might get the better sale which alone of them selfe would haue, but littel esteeme; But let not Mr. S. pretend loue in this: for loue 1. Cor. 13. thinketh not euill: But hee in this hath done euill: loue rejoyceth in the trueth.

But hee strifeth in error and contention, therfore let Mr. S. feare that hee is guiltye of this Scripture, Prou. 26. 18. 19. 21. which saith: As a mad man casteth fire brandes arrowes & death, so is the man that deceiueth his neighbour, and faith am not I in sport, so hee speakest of loue, but hee casteth vntruethes scandalles, and reproches and error.

M. Staef. in the beginning of his Preface sheweth from the 1. Sam. 7. 2. how that the people of God lamented after the Lord, and as hee saith, the same affectione mee thinkes I perceive in many of you: to the which I answere, it ought not only to be the affectione of many: But of all: Gods people to lament the want of the Lords holy ordinances, and wheras hee speakest of divers inconveniences for the want of the ministery, alas who will not grant it, and more then hee speakest of, but wheras hee saith; Being divers times hurried & torne, with the loud out cryes and hard handling of furious and vnmercifull spirits. These things will fall ypon the head of Mr. S. himselfe: but first I answer: that wee are but weake mene and do sin in our best actions, how much more in the handling of the matteres of controversie, in the which there is allwayes opposition, yea all though the cause be never so just.

And especially such subtil opposeres as Mr. S. and such as are with him be, and not only subtil, but violent and vnrefty and labouring daily to corrupte others who shoulde others wayes thinke. But that in these troubles in many things wee have sinned, I speake it to Godes glory and our owne shame, although the chiefe matter in coun-

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countrouersy mustly vpon the head of Mr. S. wher it is due with all the euill euentes that doth follow hee being the cause of it. But vnto his clamours, I answer, although wee bee weake & subiect to fayle, yet it followeth not therfore that his clamours are true: for what be the outcryes by the which hee or any are torn with all, I hope in countrouersy men must be answered, and if sinne be committed it ought to be blamed, but haue wee done as hee hath done, not only with his tong and pene to send letters, but also in print to send abroad his injurious writings by the which hee slandereth his neighbours, and not only once, but the second time as for example his 16. Questions set out the yeare 1623. would not any man that readeth them thinke that they are our grounds that hee hath sett out by the way of question, whereas in deed they are his owne framing as they may fite his owne turne beste, yea some altogether false as question the 5. and others the like may not one of them are so sett downe as that wee will approue of it: therfore as Mr. S. hath done euill in making such questions, so hath the answerer, or made his answer according as his mind was declined: and as Mr. S. hath done vs Injurie in them, so hath hee now as I shall shewe, if wee had thus done vnto him then hee might have complained of outcryes. But hee is like a quarrelling man which layeth hard strokes vpon his neighbours, & with all crieth out that hee hath the injury: & if hee be so bold as to sett out in print such vntruetes against vs: what may wee thinke hee hath done in secret with his tong and pene wher wee cannot come to know it: a few words is convenient more to be spoken concerning his 16. Questions, hee saith in his Epistle that hee was much prouoked lately to further it by some amongst vs, I am doubtfull of it, although hee saith that diuers can witnesse it because I know how vnresty hee is, and how smale an occasion hee will take to be provoked vnto his end lesse strife, nay was it not rather that hee toke an occasion both then & now to sett his Printery a worke, for in deed if hee goeth one as hee doth begin hee may make great vollomes to idle contention: but I hope a Christian answer may satisfie a deserter reader & to keepe to the mayne things that are different betweene vs, but if any did provoke Mr. S. I hope they did not provoke him to sett downe lies nor yet to pervert our realons by his owne formings. Hee saith these questions & answers were severall times tendered to our sight which

wee would not vouchsafe to regard : to the which I answer neither doe wee regard them now , but doe retourne them to the former of them to whome they are due , & desire him as reason requireth that bee will give his leaue to frame our owne groundes , as wee haue just occasions : and for our not receiving in to publique these questions & answers, by the answer allredye geven wherin is shewed how vntrue they are,are sufficiete,not to receive them,& also wee had experiance of his troublesomnes before : and should such things be read to the congregation moreouer it was signified that if they came with repentence wee were redy to hear it, and to receiue them with gladnes, but to read his forged writings in the Church wee have no warrant in the word of God, nor any example nor costome : And whereas bee saith: In these to our vnderstanding are comprehended the marrowe & substance of the things in difference betweene vs arising , both from that letter writ to London , the cause of our misery and other actions and dealinges occasioned from the same. To the which I answer first hee himselfe granteth. Them to be collected and composed questions in that bee saith: in these to our vnderstanding are comprehended, which as bee saith , did arise both from the letter and other actions and dealinges occasioned : Answer. But doth not our opposites knowne : that the amisse placeing of words or the lacking of a word : or the adding of a word may change the sence, & too whome made bee these questiōs, was is not to one that was corrupted with the same error that he held. even as dipt as himselfe, and should wee not exspect a good resolution: neither will the marrowe and substance of the differences betweene vs, appeare by such questions and answers , for som questions which bee gathereth, are amisshepen and wanteth that that should be with it, and some are false, and it is no marveile : for bee saith they arise from actiōs. and dealings occasioned : and who knoweth not that by such compositions wee may be very much wronged and so wee are in deed. But wher bee calleth our letter the cause of our misery. To the which I answer his error and his vnrestynes in his error is the cause of our misery in all these troubles in questions , and for the letter although it is insearne as it is by man compoled , yet is it a worke of God by his people against errorre & sinne, being the manifesting of our Judgment confermed by the word of God against that Samaritanest Couenant: being there unto called: and haue not wee the Scriptures plentifull for our

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our warrant, having the Prophetes and Apostels for our example, it being appert of our spirituall warfare against since and seed of the serpente to witnesse against such counterfeit Couenant as the Prophet saith : Osea. 10.4. They have spoken words swearing falsly in making a Covenant : and as Iohn saith, Reu. 2.10. I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Iewes and are not, but are the Synagogue or Satan : and have wee not also an example in a such like caufe as this in the Church of Ephesus which was commanded by the Holy Ghost Reu. 2.2. for examining of them which faith they was Apostells, and are not : and hast found them liars. And should wee be blamed for examining of them as say they are visible Christians, and haue made a true Covenant when in deed they are found to be liars and this man: who is the chiefe cause of this our misery hath bin found falty in this respect long ago in London for hee went to Mr. Lee, and his people and desired of them Communion signifying to them that hee vvas as they ware: being in the same Covenant, & so got into theire Communion : But vwhen they came to heare that Mr. S. had deceiued them: ther vvas a meeting appointed betvvene Mr. Lee and his people, & Mr. Iacobe and his people, at thevvhich Mr. Sta. himselfe vvas preſente and three other men vvhich aftervwards were members of our Church vvhich testified vnto vs, hovv things was caried : so being come together, Mr. Iacobe theiir manifested as the truth vvas that they never intented separation from the Church of England : appearing to Mr. S. I for vvitnesſe saying their sities Mr. S. Let him gainsay it if hee can : to the vvhich speech, hee had not one vword to gainsay : yet after this hee coming over to vs hee caried himselfe in the like manner to vwards vs, and vvee being ignorante hovv things did stand and hee concealing the truth, hee had almost dravynge our teacher to yeld to lett him communicate. But vwhen these 3. Brethren had given in their testimony hovv things did stand, then our teacher saith : That them it vvas to be conſidered other vvayes, & no doubt if the Lord had continued his life hee vwould haue discouered that Couenant in queſtion, and yet for all this did this man continue in his syntrue ſpeak- ing a long time after this ſaying that they vvere the moſt part ſepa- rated, and vwhen hee vvas asked, vwhy hee did not then excepte againſt Mr. Iacobe vwhen hee appealed to him for vvitnesſe : and being obſerved that your ſilence vvas a conſent as in ſuch cauſes it is often-

times : to the vywhich hee ansuyered that it did not follow, that because hee ansuyered not, that therfore it vvas so : and yet behold be-

R. B.      sides M. Iacobes testimony vvee sence haue other vvitnesse of honest

D. P.      men, vwhich vvas at the Couenant making, that none of them vvee

separated, and this is vnder ther ovne hands ratified : and in one of

their testimonies vwhich vvas don by their eldere hee is blamed t<sup>h</sup> in

as followveth : vvhosoever shall say that they vvere separated, may

vvel take shame vnto themselues, yea though it should bee M. S. him-

S. I.      selfe, and vnto this vwriting is the hands of. Three more vvhich testi-

E. H.      fye that all of them vvent to hearing in the Church of England after

A. B.      the Couenant making to ther knoyledge : and nowv seeing that these

things are so in the vvhich this man hath gone beyond himselfe in the

speciall ground from vvhence all these our troubles did arise, hovv

should hee feare himselfe even in his errour, and to take heed hovv

hee goeth one in his proceedings least the Lord leave him vnto hard-

nes of harte, and to blindnes of eyes, as a just recompence for striuen

against the truth : or to lay a snar in Mizpach, to insnare the soules of

men, or to doe as Balaam did, which taught Balac to put a stumbling

blocke before the Children of Israell, which this man hath done, and

doth in the maintaining of that Samaritanesh Couenant, as through

the helpe of the Lord, I shall proue in due time : And none to re-

tourne to Mr. S. Preface againe hee calleth vs vnmercifull spirits,

vvho vnder pretence of godly zeale, and hatred against sinne vngodly

malfacre the true and living members of Christ body. First I answer

that if I should follow him in all his clamours and insinuations, & also

his taking vp of mens weaknesse let fall in reasoning, and dispute

which hee vleth to hide his ovne faultes and transgressions: then I say

vvee might haue vvorke enough to doe, and increase vnonprofitable

writting. But let him knowv that all men of vvisdome vwill thinke it

apoore shifte to helpe himselfe with mens sinnes, or infirmities to

couer his ovne sinnes, & so to quoide the maine matter in difference

therfore fit it is : leing hee would not rest in his errour in peace:

that nowv hee should. Both justifie his errour and his vntestynes in

his errour, which vvas the caule of his casting out or else to fall vnder

it : and to retourne with repentance, but leing hee bath vwritten v-

ntrueths I shall make a briefe ansuyer vnto them : But first vvhier hee

saith vvee are furious & ynmercifull, vwith other reprochfull termes

before

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before named : hee should haue stayed himselfe in these things vntill such time as hee had made good his cause in question, for vvhio is not just in ther ovne cause in their conceite which be in contention as hee is, and therfore the euill of his reproches, and all the hinderances vnto the truth, which hee speaketh of must lye vpon himselfe, except hee could make his errour truth and his vnestynnes, with seeking to see to be good and lawful, which I knowv is more then hee is abell to doe. And for his quoting of Scriptures hovv largly and fitly might they all be applyed vpon himselfe as 1. Thess. 4. 1. might be applyed to him to shew his busines before hee came to vs, and vvhil hee vvas vwith vs : and since hee vvas cast out being a raiser vp of contention for breaking those Scriptures Galat. 5. 15. and 1. Cor. 11. 16. also for Rom. 16. 17. Hovv euidently doth that Scripture reprove his factious action, for the vvhich hee vvas cast out. But I leaue the manifesting of it vnto his propre place. And for the other whom hee faith are thrust out of the Church: vvhich vvitnesse for them I hope all men of vnderstanding may consider, that men that haue euill causes for the most part they lack not some partaker to assist them : And for them vvere they not as forvvard as any to cast out these tvvo opposites, yea more forvvard then many, and I am suer more forward then my selfe, and vhat hath chaged theire mindes they say the meeting of the brethren aftervvards to be spoken of vvhich I may say is lese then affige leaue to couer there shame : and therefore may it not bee well feared that respects haue stollen awaye ther affectiō seing theire reason of change is of so little vvaignt : and for this I can shew reasons, but at this time I spare; because that some although justly touched: yet vwould bee to much moued, and although I could say more yet I stay here, knowving that such things doth, but tend to vaine tanglinge. But this man hath administred the cause to speake this. And wheras hee saith vvee reject the vword of God & all vviolsome counsell for our amendment contrary to the very letter of the 38. article, and why did hee not shew vherin also: was it not because hee might doubt of the truth of his affirmation and suer, if it be layd vpon him for an vntruth, I see not how hee can shifte it for our article speaketh of the communion that all Churches haue for counsell, and helpe in all needfull things in the common faith, and this did wee practise in that our letter to the Church at London, in the vvhich this man did so much oppose vs, after hee hath

hath made all this troubell, and also vvee practise that article as wee haue just occasion : But doth hee meane wee breake this article because wee doe not at his pleasure his will or the willes of such as he stoureth vp to bring other Churches, to bee judges whether hee bee rightly cast out or not, if all that are cast out should haue that righte as I know not why hee should haue more right then others : then the Churchs should haue worke enough to doe to looke to others busynesses & to neglect their owne. But wee must learne to put a differance betweene that which concearneth the common faith, and the proper power that euery leuerall Church hath in it selfe : as for example in Reu.2. and 3. chap. euery particular Church hath theire commandation or reprofe as they deserved : and as the Church of Pergamus was reprooved for suffering of such as taught the Doctrine of Balaam, so needed they not to aske another church whether they should restraine them that so taught or, vwhether they should cast them out if they vwould not be restrained, or vwhen they had cast out anie to call for other Churches to know vwhether they had done vvel or not in so doing, especially to such Churches as vvere corrupted vwith the same errore, and hear obserue: that vwhen vvee did followv our article in the sending our letter to the Church at London at theire request, then wee did euill as hee accounts, because it was against his errore. But now vvee must followv him although against reason, and bring our pouer into bondage or else hee vwill tell vs, vvee reject the vword of God, and doe contrary to our ovyne article, hee telleth vs of our teachers speech vpon his deathbed concerning Christian moderation, suerly, the best of vs doth, come to shorte of it often times, but vwhy did hee himselfe so soone forget it, seing hee vvas so vnresty in his errore: for hee vvas theire, and heard his vwords. But they vvhom hee aymeth at to my best remembrance vvas not their: vpon vvhom hee taketh this occasion, to speake things not conuenient, and to bring in another mans speech vvhich helpeth not him in his matter to make it good or euill: neither will vvismen think it wisdome in him, to set out mens infirmities to the vworld thinking therby to couer his owne: And for the caules troubles contrary to the Lavy and Gospell, which hee speaketh of that is to be proued by him, or they that can: vwhen vvee come to the pointe. Hee saith, the Church of Leyden hath plainly proued it too vs. I knowv not that they haue proue any such thing. But one thing

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thing I know that they take things for granted that are not so : as for example Mr. S. saith that wee doe contrary to the letter of the 8. po-  
sition in our Apologie, wher hee would make others beleefe that his  
sinnes in question are, but matters of suspected euills, and not euills in  
deed, vtherin hee shall find himselfe greatly deceiued when hee com-  
eth to the triall therof : and wher hee saith certain discontented bre-  
thren made a meeting to change that solemne agreemēt of the church,  
the elder consenting and acting with them. Answer : How can this  
man cleare himselfe from a willfull vntrueth in this thing, being their  
were diuers Brethren their and all vvitnesse except one man, that they  
did nothing, but desired the elder that in the writing of the letter that  
hee should be carefull to keepe to the true meaning and minde of the  
Church : in that their sentence and the reason why they did so desir  
him vvas because as they told the elder that some of those fevv con-  
trary minded brethren did pervert the Churches meaning alredy: and  
that one which indeuoured to seeke and make matter about this mee-  
ting, yet in the publique when the thing was in question hee confessed  
and layd, that their vvas nothing done or concluded by the brethren.  
Now this man being one that was present, and also being very willing  
to condemne the brethren, if he could haue don it, yet hee thus con-  
fessing, and all the brethren testifying as before is layd, and denieth  
Mr. S. accusation, and Mr. S. hath bin told of these things although  
hee hath thus written: and doth hee not know, that if a thing bee de-  
nyed by on man, in any acte done that hee is accused of that one I say  
cannot be condemned, but by the mouth of tvvo constant witnesse:  
how then is this man guiltles which vwould condemne many, and yet  
not hauing one constant witnesse: & for that which hee saith the elder  
bringing the letter was blamed for writing contrary to the Churches  
joint agreement, and his owne promise would not hee make the reader  
beleefe that the Church blamed the elder; because their agreement  
was altered an that therfore the letter was tourned backe again : But  
vvas it not hee that blamed the elder, and the other three brethren  
that stod with him, for their vvas no more at that time that I can re-  
member. But for the Church they knew their ovne minde and ex-  
cepted of it as their owne minde to condemne the Couenant. But be-  
cause M. S. and another were produced for witnesse, and hee refused  
it and layd the other vwould not do it neither : therfor was it willed

B

the

*about get  
answre about  
your meeting*

*turning backe  
by Agreemēt*

the elder to put that thing out : and this was the tourning backe of the letter. But howe collarable doth hee sett it dovyne to make it fayer for his porpose : much like the diuell's ancient oracle vwhich might be tourned tvvo vvayes, for hee telleth the reader, it was blamed, but hee telleth not by whome it was blamed, hee saith it vvas tourned backe: But hee telleth not vherfore the Church tourned it backe: & wher

*his answere  
of reuidence  
and vnderstanding  
of his day*

hee saith, that the elder vvas vvilled to wrt the first peacable agreement: it may be hee might so plead or so speake, but that the Church did so, it is not true: But as befor it hath bin signified, and why doth hee thus: is it not because hee would haue the reader to vnderstand it vvas because his errore vvas condemned which in deed vvas not so: and I am persuaded hee dares not say otherwayes although hee bath thus written. But their is one thing more to be spoken of: which is that hee and some with him, would bear vs downe: that the Church did not condemne the Couenant at the first, but left it vnjudged: to this I answer divers things briefly, & first I suppose that hee knoweth, that vpon his clamours and some vwith him that then the sentece of the Church was called, vwhich gaue their sentece: that they condemned the Couenant the first daye: 2. his ovne freinds vwhich as hee sayd witnesseed for him: they I say tourning their mindes about towards Mr. S. they made 6. or 7. vveekes contention, saying that the Churches sentence vvas altered, and vwhy, layd they, because the word false was added in the letter: therefore sayd they the Church condemned the Couenant sufficiently by other words. But the word false was auoyded for offence sake: thus it went on 6. or 7. weekes till the letter was looked into, and then it vvas found that the word false was not their. But to the thing in had this is the testimony of his owne friends, but that which wee say or his ovne freinds haue sayd is nothing with him for hee will goe one needlesly to endlesse contention, 3. needlesse I say, for if it had bin as hee sayeth that the Church had not condemned the Couenant the first day, because they vwould not offend those few brethren: if then those few brethren, made an euill ys of it: I hope the Church had power to condemn it afterwards for their owne preleruation both of their membres, and of the trueth: and who compelled the Church to consent: vvas it not because it was their ovne minde to condemn the Couenant. But had the Church don as hee saith in that thing: then I say had hee done as the Prophet saith

*Note*

## AGAINST CONTENTION.

ii

saith to lay a snar in Mizpha. 4. lett not him thinke that this Samari-  
tanest Couenant should haue that priviledge which circoncision had  
which was the Lords seale of old to be laid downe in honnour , yet  
when it was abused, the Apostell left the vse thereof, and vwould not  
giue place for one hower : but is it a thing likly that when the elder  
brought the letter to reade it, being but a weeke betweene that none  
of the Church could minde that the sentence vvas altered , but hee &  
them fevv vvith him for hee knovv their is freedom of exception to  
all , but one thing more is to be obserued concerning the difference  
betwenee the dealing of this men, and those brethren vvhom hee ac-  
cusest in that meeting , for vvhen his matter vvas in the publique hee  
refused to debat the matter, but vwould haue it tourned to priuate, but  
those brethren whom hee accuseth, did not only lay dovvn vwhat they  
did in that their meeting, but offered themselves to the triall of all that  
if any could shew it to be otherwayes they should do it : and not only  
once, but divers times vvas this in question and allwayes they offering  
themselves to triall.

And vwhereas hee speaketh of a thing yet worse, for either the elder  
alone or these priuy counsellers vvith him, stod not to this secōd agree-  
ment the Church made, but vvhote another with alteration, addition,  
and diminishing : besides the Churches knowledge and consent, and  
sent it for the churchs minde and act. Answer first, vvhether hee speaketh  
of the second agreement, I knovv but one agreement , tvisle spoken  
of, and the occasion is manifested before, two if the alteration which  
hee speaketh of, had bin by him sett dovvne : then it may be it would  
appeare to be , but that vvhich hee had commission from the Church  
to doe, as he himselfe granteth in some thing, but vheras hee speaketh  
of adding and diminishing, these things are yet to proue , for I knovv  
not of any such thing : neither any man that I knovv of did see the  
letter or gaue any counsell concerning it , after it cam from the publi-  
que, but the elder himselfe.

But vheras hee saith that they were cast out vpon a very suspicione  
that a fevv of them met to writ to contradict the Churches action.  
Answer , I can not but maruell at him , that hee should thus ran into  
this vntruth to say that it vvas but suspicione, did not hee himselfe con-  
fesse, yea of himselfe manifest, both to the elder , and also to others  
before it came to the Church besides some that heard the letter reade,

and I hope, hee dares not deny. But that hee did grante in the publique in the generall, that his letter was the apposing of the letter of the Church, although hee would not in the particulars debat the matters.

*No. 1.*  
And after hee vvas cast out hee sayd, vwhat did hee, but take avay the erronist grounds vwhich Mr. Delaycluce vrvrit in the letter: and therfore he thinking his errour is a trueth, it may be hee thinketh so to deceiue the reader, so likevvise hee calleth the laying dovvne of the matter in the Church the false information of the elder, and that tyyo of them vvere singled out, and selected from the rest. First I ansyver, vwhat doth hee call the false information of the elder, I hope hee knoweth that both himselfe, & to other vwith him did manifeste to the elder themselves that they had vrvritten in opposition to the Church, and so consequently contrary to that trueth, vwhich the Church maintained in the letter: vvas it not this that the elder informed the Church of, hee also saith that tyyo vvere singled out from the rest, in vwhich hee vwould giue the reader to vnderstand, as if all that those tyyo had got to their meeting, vvere at the first knowne vvheras in deed it vvas othervvayes: for although it was knovyne that they had a meeting to that porpose, yet every particular person vvas not then knowne, but those tyyo opposites made knowne themselves to the elder of the Church pretending to him as if they vwould submit it to correction: the elder refuled to meddle vwith it himselfe, but told them that it parteined to the Church; they consented to haue it come to the church, but vwhen it vvas propounded and laid downe their, then they refused to answere or to debat the matter, nor yet to deliuer vp the letter: and the reason that they pretended vvas, becaule the elder in the laying dovvne of the matter sayd that that vwhich they had done vvas a thing of an euill nott, and vvas this a sufficient reason to refuse to debat the matter: vwhat if the elder had done like Moses Numb. 32. 14. or like the messenger of the Church, Iosua 22. 18. or like Ely 1. Sam. 1. 14. all these vvere directly charged vwith heavy charges and they vvere cleare, yet did they Christianlik debat their matters, & cleared themselves, but these opposites vvere, but touched & presently they kiked, and so fulfilled the common proverb that agalled horse backe is soon herte: but they ought rather to haue approued themselue or to haue submitted themselves to the meanes to come out of their sinne, as Dauid faith Psalm 14. 5. Let the righteous smite mee, it shall be a kindnes:

kindnes: and let him reprove mee, it shall be an excellent oyle which shall not breake my head. Wher was their pretended committing it to correction when vpon so little occasion they refused triall in the right place where it should be tried. And for that speech which hee saith the informer speake that it might be holy, just & good: for ought hee knew, this was a speech spoken to prouoche him to answyer whilles they were a reasoning together. And the best of vs may elape words some times in reasoning that will not stand: yet is not this man the clearer for all that.

*Note*

But wher hee saith that the matter was followed by interrogatories to finde out sinne. Answer: sinne was found when his vnrestynes in his error was found, and this being novv manifested, and layd dovvn to the Church, wee needed not make much cerching to find the sinne, but rather to vle the best meanes wee could to draw them out of their sinne which then did appeare: and hovv could this be done, but their must be questiōs or demandes, or as hee termeth them interrogatories, and a little after hee calleth them intraping demandes, but hee must not shifte the thing so, for did not hee altogether refuse to debat the matter in the publique, saying they were not according to the rull Matth. 18. dealt with all, therfore they refused to debat the matter in the publique, and hee knoweth vwell, that when any is asked a question, that is not meet or reasonable they may, and doe refuse to answyer, and so might hee have done if hee could haue shevved vn-lawfull questions, but in that hee did refuse altogether to answer or to debat, the matter therin was their sinne of oppoling of gouernment, and hovv contrary vvere they in this to the seruants of God of old: Numb. 32.14.15.16. Iosua 22.21. Who although they were charged with heawy charges and had not sinned, yet they answvered and cleared themselues. But these although they had sinned, yet they refused to debat or to answyer, and neglected the meanes to come out of their sinne: and for his saying it vvas contrary to Matth. 18. I refer the reader to the answyer of his postscript. Hee saith that they were cast out without knowledge of sinnes, &c also that they protested solemnly they had neither don the thing so suspected nor intended it. Answyer, I still except against his word suspected, for the thing was plaine layd vpon them: for although at the first it was caried vwith a low and safe vword, saying that it vvas a thing of an euill nott, and that they

ought to answer even to apperances of euill in such publique matters of the Church as this was , and leing they did run vnto such an action, they ought to answer, and to that end vvas Iosua 22. and 1. Thes. 5. 22. brought the one shewing that Christians ought to keepe themselves from apperances of euill : the other Scripture shewing that if a Christian doth any thing that seemeth contrary to the Law of God, they ought to cleare themselves , and to this was added Actes 11. wh- Petter cleared himselfe, but all this could not persuad them to ansyver and to debat the matter, so when they still refused : their sinne was condemned by Ephes. 4. 3. 4. and 1. Cor. 3. 3. and other Scriptures, and by these Scriptures was their factious or vnlawfull meeting condemned as their refusall too ansyver vvas condemned , as befor is shewed : so then sinne was knowne before they vvere cast out: but what is that vvhich hee protested they had neither done nor intended it befor I haue shewed hovv they opposed the Church in the trueth, in that their vnlawfull meeting , to the vvhich I ad this: they that maintaine an errore doe sinne Reu. 2. 14. they that seduce to errore doth sinne vers. 20. they that sequester apart of the church against the church, the church maintaining the trueth doth sinne Rom. 16. 17. and all this did they in that meeting, therfore when wee knew of their meeting to conferme that letter : vvee knew that all this vvas by them committed : but it may be hee will excepte , and say that the thing vvas not so layd downe to them at the first as now I doe, that is true , but were not they the cause of that that it was not, leing they refused to debat, the matter or to answer as I haue shewed therefore the sinne was condemned in the generalls , as I shewed before. But hovv shall wee vnderstand his protestation concerning his intendement, it may bee hee did not intend any euill, & why because hee minded it to be good, & for the trueth : but wee meddle not with his intendement, but with his action. Petter though hee intended good when hee par-  
tialed the Lord Iesus not to suffer at Ierusalem. But therin hee was an instrument of Satan to ouerthrow the saluation of all Gods electe, if Satan could haue preuailed by him, and as Petter good intend could not beare him out , leing his deed was euill , yea although it was his ignorance , so will not his good intend helpe him, leing his deed vvas euill : Hee goeth one vwith many clamours after his manner , to the which I haue giuen some ansyver before. But where bee chargeth vs with

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with partiallity for spearing of scandalous euills least our euill combination, should be weakened discouered or broken. Answer, if all that which this man saith were true, it might make vs appeare euill in the eyes of men : to the which end hee setteth it out : that hee might coller his owne euills, but wee must minde it to be the fruites of his loue, and his loue token thus to do, for hee hath told vs in the beginning of his booke that therefore hee hath sett out Mr. Answorts sermon.

But would hee haue done Mr. Answorth that injury , but vpon this occasion hee might also power out his malice against vs : but to the thing in hand, I considered in my selfe what hee did meane by those scandalous euills , but I could not minde what hee aimed at, so I asked M. S. vwhat hee did meane by these scandalous sinnes hee speake of in his booke, but hee shifted mee of and would not tell mee; now what dealing is this that a man vwill sett out to the world such reproches, and refuse to manifest them to one that might vse meanes to helpe them, if their bee any : but let honest men judge of this his doings. Hee saith further that irregular proceedings haue made our brethren in all places to hange downe their heads , and hee saith wee haue bin plainly certified from sundry churches. Ansver that wee haue bin so certified from sundry churches , I know no such thing. But it is his manner if on man let a word fall, hee will apply it to all, as see the answer to his Postscript : now true it is, that one Church which received him to them by his Samaritanesh Couenant , they in deed do take his part or else they must condemne themselues, but for any more I know not any : But if it were so, it would not make him cleare in his matter; therfore let him leaue these clamours , and stand to the cause in differance, that lo bee may either approue himselfe or fall vnder it. And wheras hee saith now for thele , and the like offences diuers that were of vs turn the backe vpon vs, and betake themselues to liue at large, as if now the dore of indifferency or libertinisme were sett open, that it matters not whome they heare or wher they walke.

## THE COVENANT EXAMINED.

### ANSWER.

**B**ut can hee spy the living at large of diuers that haue received the trueth which nowy haue declined, and can hee finde no other occa-  
sion

sion vvhich they take for their stumbling , but those things which bee speaketh of : for those vvhich hee hath let down, I refere the reader to the answer giuen, but I can nam some friend of his , who hath rather opened the dore of indifferances wherby many hath taken occasion to decline. But first I say to him, is not hee the man himselfe, which hath made a pathe way for such libertins in the maintaining of that Couenant of desemblyation in the which hee vwould bring light and darknes in to one habitation, in that hee vwould make vs beleue that antichristians never leauing their antichristian estat, are fit matter for to make a true Couenant with God, and that they can make a true Couenant, and so become visible Christians, & not only so, but also daily practise their pretended Couenant and keepe their communion in their anti-christian assemblies vvhose in deed they are , if these be not the right Samaritanes in their practise then let the indifferant judge : But hovv contrary is this vnto the Scriptures, Matth. 3. 6. 2. Cor. 6. 14. 17. 18. Reu. 18. 4. which sheweth vnto vs : that God doth receiue vs into Communion vpon this condition, to come out, and to separat from the false vrayes of the vworld and least our corrupt flesh should put differant, and so take an occasion to continue in any one false vray more then another , therefore saith the Holy Ghost, and touch no vncleane thing and I will receiue you , and I vwill be a father vnto you, and yee shall be my sones and daughters, saith the Lord almighty. If the Lord hath made this condition, as it is cleare hee hath, who should not feare to plead the contrary or so to practise : moreouer did not they that were baptized confesse their sinnes. Matth. 3. 6. And vvas not baptisme to them in the true Church are newing of their Couenant in Christ then come , and they that were not in the true Church before did they not enter into a Couenant with God in Christ , vvhen they were baptized, and was it not don vnto all vpon the confession of their sinnes ? how comes it to passe then that these men before named beeing vnseparated , and vvalking in their publique sinnes should be pleaded for to be sufficient Couenantmakers, & that they haue made a true Couenant with God, let not any thinke that this distinction will helpe them in this cause to say that they walke in the trueth , so far as they see or vnderstand : surely this is a very crooked , and a vneuen measur to measure our obedience vnto our creatoour. But should the commandements of the blessed God bee limited , and bounded vnto the

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the blind vnderstanding of sinfull man, or as if the spirit of God had not lefte sufficient derection vnto vs, either hovv far or with whome to walke in such publique matters of religion, in the which these anti-christian idolaters haue leſſe to say for themſelues then thoſe their predeceſſors which were before them Exodus 32. which when they made the calfe they had not the Lords order or direcſion, for the Lords publique worship as yet giuen vnto them: and therefor they ran into that greuiouſe ſin: Moyleſe ſtaying long away as verſe the 1. ſhoweth: But the Lord hath not only giuen plaine order, and rulles in his vword to theſe men: but alſo hath raifed many faithfull witness(es), both by voice, and alſo by bookeſ to shovv the wayes of God, and to declare their ſinne vvhich they neglect, & alſo reject: but to come too this man vvhoo prepareth this pathe way in the maintaining of this Couenant, hovv eaſie is it for Sattan to preuaile with any being poſſeſſed vvhith this error whether they be in the false Church then their to vvalke in this way of deſſemblaſion, and thiſke to bleſſe themſelues as Naaman did 2. Kings 5.17. with two mules load of earth thiſking to ſerue the Lord in the land of Sirian, and that hee needed not to trouble himſelue to go to Ieruſalem: but this being contrary to the commandement of God, Deut.12.13.14. and the Prophet ſeeing it: and alſo his ſodden and conuſed motions vvhich althoſh hee poſſeſſed not to ſacrifices to any other God ſauē only to the Lord. But yet hee propoſed and poſſeſſed to bow down in the house of Rimmon his maſters God, and for that hee vvwould aſke pardon befor hee did it: now I ſay the Prophet ſeeing his ſodden, and conuſed motion bid him go in peace, that is ſo much as lay, far yee well: as if the Prophet ſaw it not fit to reſolute his doubts, nor to direct him to go to Ieruſalem where the true place of vvorſhip vvas: and are not theſe Couenantmakers much like vnto him, who in their conuſed motions or conſiderations, thiſke they need not to leaue or forſake their antichristian eſtat. But their to remaine, & thiſke to bleſſe themſelues by a ſequeſtered meeting from their brethren the antichristians on part of the day, and to communicaſt with them the other part of the day: but do theſe men thiſke that by ſequeſtering themſelues from their brethren to change their cōdition. Oh no, for as the Prophet ſhoweth Haggi 2.14. that if a polluted perſon touch any hollowed thing, he is ſo far from making himſelue cleane therby, that hee maketh the holy thing vncleane, and ſo not acceptable: wher-

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whervpon it vwill follow that their priuat gathering together, and taking to themselues the ordinances of God is so far from sanctifying of them, that they polut the holy things of God, whilles they stād in the antichristian estat: or doe they thinke they are the nearer to the Lord by vsing of vvords to make a Couenant, they remaining in their antichristian estat, no althoough they do it with great zeale and oath, yet it helpeth them not, as the Prophet saith, Hosea 10. 4. They haue spoken vvords swering falsly in making a Couenant: neither lett them thinke, that it is a lowable for them to sett vp a ministery in that estat: for as it was sayd vnto their predecessor Esra. 4. 3. it is not for you, but for vs to build the houſe vnto our God: and if the Lord did so detest the old Babylon vvhich was, but the tipe of this antichristian Babylon that their should not be a ſton taken, Jerem. 51. 26. neither for corner nor for foundation, vwho ſhould not be afraide to mannaſ the ſtones of this ſpirituall Babylone, to bee fit matter for the Lords houſe. But hovv doe these men bleſſe themſelues ſome thing like vnto Michah Judges 17. 13. who being in his idolatry ſayd, I knowv that the Lord will be good vnto mee, ſeeing I haue a Leuit to my preift. So these men ſtanding in their antichristian estat, thinke themſelues vwell now, ſeeing they haue imitated the order of the church of God in their priuat meetings. But that it may the better appeare that these are the right ſucceſſors of the Samaritanes, I vvil compare them together. First the Samaritanes they tooke it on them to ſerue the Lord, 2. Kings 17. 33. But they ſerued their idoles alſo. So these Couenantmakers they tooke it on or pretended to ſerue the Lord in their lequeſtered priuat meetings from their brethren the antichristians, and ſo pretended to ſet vp the Lords ordinances, but with all they would not forſake the antichristian estat, but walk in both together, and ſo continue as the Samaritanes did. 2. The Samaritanes thus abiding in their conuulfion or mixed religion, yet when the people of God retourned out of captiuitie they preſented themſelues, vnto them to be in vniōn and communion, and profered to build with them, teſtifying that they did ſeeke the Lord their God as they did, ſaying alſo that they had Esra 4. 2. ſacrificed vnto him from their firſt planting in Samaria: So like- wife these men althoough abiding in their mixed religion and conuulfion, yet eſteeme it to be the true way of God, and would be eſteemed: of thoſe that are ſeparated to be their brethren, and profeſſe their way and

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and course to be the building vp of the house of God; taking vpon them the name of a true Church. 3. Although these Samaritanes were not accepted, but refused, yet did som of them indirectly creep into communion with the people of God: So some of these creep into communion indirectly, pretending that vwhich they were not, in the which this man was the chiefe, first as I haue before showed when hee creeped into Mr. Lees people into their communion, and after that cam ouer heare, and vwould haue had communion with vs: but hee seeing himselfe to haue resistance heare, after this hee vvent to Leyden, and creeped into that Church, and so made of them a bridge to git in vnto vs. 4. The Samaritanes in their corrupt estat fatered themselues vpon the ancient Patriarches of the Church, Iohn 4. 12. 20. and contended with the true Church as hauing the triueth with them: So likewise these account their mixed estat to be the true vway of God, and condemne vs for vvholly separating from the false Church: and contend vwith vs for it. 5. Although these Samaritanes vvere thus corrupt in their estat, yet had they attained vnto the chiefe pointes of faith concerning the Messias, as may appeare by the speech of the Woman Iohn 4.25. vwhich vvas one not stricke in life, vers. 18. & conuerstation, I say, if shee vwhich vvas but a Woman, could say so much, what may wee thinke was amongst the other Samaritanes; and also wee may see how redily they receiued Christ, as vers. 39. & 42. sheweth, and yet for all thole points of Doctrine which they had receiued, notwithstanding they were condemned by our Sauiour Christ, Iohn 4.22. as worshipping they knew not what: which teacheth vs how to judge, and esteeme of such mixed religions. And now these Couenant-makers although they agree with vs in the chiefe pointes of faith, yet seeing they continue in their corrupt estat, being vnseparated from the false Church, wee are taught of Christ how to esteeme of them, and so leaue them to be the successors of the Samaritanes, and their right heires. Now this is the Couenant which Mr. S. maintaineth, and for the which hee so restored himselfe when it was condemned: and doth not hee lay afar ground to keepe men in the way of desemblation, and so to remaine in the false Church by the maintaining of this Couenant: yee, & to be a snare to such as haue left them, if once they be possessed, with this errour, and let vs take himselfe for an example, for although hee had left the Church of England, both as it was a nationall Church,

## A CHRISTIAN REPROFE

and also the Parishes holding, both to be false, and being come so far reason should haue taught him, neuer to haue to doe with such a Samaritanesh people againe in Church communion, seeing they remaine as they did vnseparated : yet since hee was cast out from vs, hee went and had communion with them, and baptizeth his child with them also: and vwhy went hee not rather to the assemblies, seeing that that is their most proper Church estat, they being yet vnseparated, and for that their priuat meetings it is, but a schisme in Babell, & in that their doing they make a breach in both estats, both in their antichristian estat, and in their pretended seruing of the Lord, 2.Kings 17.33.34. as the Holy Ghost testifieth of their predecessor. And further I say to him concerning his clamours, who of our Church hath tourned their backe vpon vs excepte those which hee is the cause of about these troubles in question, vwhich hee through much labouring, and others with him hath inticed: but if hee meaneth those of the Church of Leyden hath declined or apostated, is it not more probabell or rather that they haue taken their ground from Mr. Ro. their Pastor hath opened so many pathe wayes: for them first in setting for priuat communion vwith the members of the false Church the maintaining of hearing in the assemblies to be no contrarie 3. in the maintaining of this Samaritanesh Couenant: booke called Apologie, hee doth not only vwith smot darken the trueth, vwhich formarly hee \* maintained. But faith plainly speaking of the Church of England in the 58. page and hee speaketh it in the name of the Church of whom hee is Pastor: that their faith doth not consist in the cōdemning of others, & wiping their names out of the bead roull of Churches. And a little after hee faith: neither requier vvec of any ours in the confession of their faith that they either renounce or in one vword contest vwith the Church of England: in this it appeareth that hee is ashamed, and runeth from separation, and of this his alteration hath the aduersaries of the trueth taken nootise of, long before this last book came out so as I. P. faith, \* speaking of his book, called the justification of separation.

\*Justification of separation.  
\* Oberue this is the moderator which Mr. St.laboured to haue.

\*An arrow against the separation of the Brun.  
Pag. 59.  
Line 25.

Which hee sett out in the defence of the trueth, it being a good vvorke, yet thus hee speaketh of Mr. Rob. concerning it that hee openly pluckes out some of the bowells thereof vwith his owne hands, and now seeing this is so, why doth this man indeuour to lay the fault upon

## AGAINST CONTENTION.

27

Upon vs: which withstand these errors, and therfore wee are of him, and them euill spoken of: but as it is vsually seen that such as run from their masters do speake euill of them, so such as decline, do speake euill of them that oppose them: & therfore lett none merueill that wee are euill spoken of by Mr. S. and by those that assist him, for it hath bin thus allwayes with the Lords people in former times, yea euen the Apostells of our Lord Jesus hath thus bin death withall: and now to these opposites I speak, wheras one of them twoo herrofor hath spoken to this effect, that if the Covenant could be desproued, that then they ought to acknowledge their euill in the things, for the vvhich they were cast out: and although but one of them speake it, yet seing hee speake the trueth, and as it ought to be therfor, I will them both to consider it, and for vs if the Lord giue repentances vnto them wee are glad, and hould our armes open to receiue them: but alas there is their of it, seeing this man hath so many times imitated the cause of Absolom vvhich vvent in to his fathers concubins, that hee haue no hope of reconciliation between them: so the vvhich hee printed his contention to the world, as if hee did continue an adversary, and therfore by these hee biddeth batte, as cause were better then it is, yet great is the euill hee causeth in causing the name of the Lord to be scandalled, Another which hee maketh for libertines is in the maintaining of his cause to answer which is before spoken of, by vvhich president of the church we see the euill effect that hath followed, for surely by his example the loule ones of the Church, and such as are corrupted begin to oppose that diligent watch as ought to be kept in the Lords house, and with his example, and his busie writing, and printing, and priuate corrupting of mens minds labouring to corrupt all that hee thinketh, hee can worke vpon as by experiance wee haue seene, and in deed notwithstanding keeping to the things as they are, as I haue showed before. Therefore that his sin in this point may the better appeare, I will briefly declare, and distingest between priuat and publique matters, and then apply his cause vnto that which it apperraineth vnto. First I find in the Scripture that the Lord both vnder the law, also in this time of the Gospell did so prouide, that all his people should bee preserued from giuing themselues liberty to sinne, both sins of priuat nature, and also of publique: the generall of this I find in Leuit. 19.17. which serueth either

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7 tane not eche to bo givon et f will not say  
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## AGAINST CONTENTION.

27

vpon vs: which withstand these errours, and therfore wee are of him, and them euill spoken of: but as it is vsually seen that such as run from their masters do speake euill of them, so such as decline, do speake euill of them that oppose them: & therfore lett none meruill that wee are euill spoken of by Mr. S. and by those that assist him, for it hath bin thus alwayes with the Lords people in former times, yea euen the Apostells of our Lord Jesus hath thus bin death withall: and now to these opposites I speak, wheras one of them twoo herto for hath spoken to this effect, that if the Covenant could be desproued, that then they ought to acknowledge their euill in the things, for the vwhich they were cast out: and although but one of them speake it, yet seing hee speake the trueth, and as it ought to be therfor, I wsh them both to consider it, and for vs if the Lord giue repentances vnto them wee shall be glad, and hould our armes open to receiue them: but alas vwhat hope is their of it, seeing this man hath so many times imitated the practise of Absolom vwhich vuent in to his fathers concubins, that so all shoulde haue no hope of reconciliation between them: so the third time hath hee printed his contention to the world, as if hee did meane to continue an adversary, and therfore by these hee biddeth battell: but if his cause were better then it is, yet great is the euill hee doth therin in causing the name of the Lord to be scandalled. Another pathe way which hee maketh for libertines is in the maintaining of his refusing, to answer which is before spoken of, by vwhich president of his wee see the euill effect that hath followed, for suerly by his example the loule ones of the Church, and such as are corrupted begin to oppose that diligent watch as ought to be kept in the Lords house, and with his example, and his busie writing, and printing, and priuate corrupting of mens minds labouring to corrupt all that hee thinketh, hee can worke vpon as by experiance wee haue seene, and in deed no keeping to the things as they are, as I haue showed before. Therefore that his sin in this point may the better appeare, I will briefly declare, and distingest betweeen priuat and publique matters, and then apply his cause vnto that which it appertaineth vnto. First I find in the Scripture that the Lord both vnder the law, also in this time of the Gospell did so prouide, that all his people should bee preserued from giuing themselues liberty to sinne, both sins of priuat nature, and also of publique: the generall of this I find in Leuit. 19.17. which serueth either

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or doyle ge man for god we forfet to answere by  
 I am not gefer to be givon of will not say

for publique or priuat, the words are these : Thou shall not hate they brother in thine hart, but thou shalt plainly rebucke they neighbour, & suffer him not to sinne. 2. Obserue if the sinne be of priuat nature and committed priuate to the knowledge, but of one brother, then is that brother bound in priuat to shew the sinner his sin : and if hee hear and repent, their it must stay, and go no further : Matth. 18.15. and

Prou. 25.9. becaule hee is wone and a sinner conuerted from going astray, and a soule sau'd from death Iames 5. 20. Now I purpose not hear to speake of all the degrees of dealing for sin : but only out of the Scripture to show that which fiteth the present purpose in hand. Therfore 3. in the next place obserue that some sinnes that are priuately committed, are not priuately to be ended by that one that knoweth it, as for example the intiser to idolatry Deut. 13.6. And also the committer of idolatry Deut. 17.2.3. which sinnes the Lord would not haue kept secret, Deut. 13.8. and which sinnes was, and is the pleasure of the Eternall that they should not be kept secret, because hee would haue his people kept in their obedience vnto him as it is most reason they should aboue all things, and to preserue his trueth : and for the preseruation of his people, and therefor the sinner was to be brought forth that his people should hear and feare, and do no more such wick-ednes Deut. 13.11. compared with 1. Timoth. 5. 20. and as in these transgressions the publique Church is to see the end therof. 4. So like-  
wise concerning the breach of the ordinances that God gaue to the Church, that they parteine to the generall to looke vnto as wee may see in Actes 11. 2. for hauing but heard that Petter had eaten vwith some vncircumcised, they thought hee had broken the ordinances, and therfore not knowing of his vvarrant they looked vnto it, & receiued his answer, yet vvas this done in a priuat house far of them, to wit, in Cesaria. 5. Likewise for doctrine vwhen any is maintained which is against the faith in the generall, or against the ordinances pertaining to the Churches, this also belongeth to the publique assemblie to looke vnto, as wee may see in Actes 21.22, in the speech of the elders vnto Paule, which although their went a false report of him that hee taught the Iewes that were amongst the Gentills to forfake Moyses, yet wee see vpon that reporte they had right to come together to be satisfied how it should stand, but that it was preuented by Gods prouidence another way. Nowv these examples I hope will be sufficient for the thing

thing in hand: And now therefore I will compare his sinne with such of these causes as be of like nature. First therfore his factious meeting agreeeth with the inticer to idolatry, Deut. 13. 6. in that hee indeuoured to corrupt the mindes of the brethren to that his errour before proued. 2. How doe these twoo examples reprove his refusing to answer, for neither of them had committed sinne, yet had the publique right to hear the things cleared, yee although they were the Apostells of Christ, but this man maintained an errour in that his factious mee-  
ting, and such an errour which being receiued openeth a vway to liber-  
tins, and destroyeth separation: and shold not this belong vnto the  
publique to looke vnto and as a publique thing: if it be layd their  
factious meeting vvas gathered in a priuat house, was not Pet-  
ters action don in a priuat house also, and that far of from them  
of Ierusalem? therefore such things as these must not be limited,  
to a priuat dealing. 3. Obserue: hovv this had relation to the  
publique naturally, for first it vvas the errour vvhich the Church did  
beare with him in and therfore hee was to keepe his judgment to him-  
selfe, and not to corrupt other their with, also it being in the Church,  
and the Church hauing condemned the Couenant: one of them tvvo  
professed to write: but presently the elder gaue them to vnderstand,  
that if they did that then they must answer it: and in deed is it a thing  
reasonable that that vvhich vvas publique, and communicated vnto all  
the whole body that one or two men should gather apart of the church  
to posseſſe their mindes against the Church; the Church maintaining  
the trueth: or in common reaon shold not the Church knowv vwhat  
they did in way of opposing in that their letter, seeing they had seene,  
and knowne all that the Church had don, suerly hee layeth vpon some  
to be many masters, but in this they caried themſelues as if they were  
the Churches masters: and I suppose they would haue taken it to be  
very euill in the Church to haue kept them out of the meeting, and  
not to let them know what the Church did in that buffnes: but they  
were presente as reason they should, and did disput to the vttermoſt  
of their power: but what would these men haue vs to thinke of their  
doing, vnlleſſe they would haue vs, thinke that they haue a priuiledge  
aboue others, if they haue then, let them shew it vnto vs: but I suppose  
they can show no priuiledge or true reason: for as all things of priuat  
nature may not be made publique without due order, so likewise that  
vvhich

which is of publique natur, and is in the publique, ought not to be opposed, and contredicte in the priuat in vnderhand dealing. But that they ought, and should be redy to shew what they do in such things, of such nature as this is: and wheras hee thus saith concerning Pastour and teacher: but what hope of euer such worties coming in when their is such an hideous noise in the house by such vnruley masters, which cruelly smit some wound others, and cast their deare brethren out at the windowes. Answer, such worties as hee speaketh of, I hope through the mercy of God, when the Lord calleth them, will not be stayed, neither by such suttell oppossares ashee is knowing that in the Apostells dayes, and in all ages the Churchs hath bin troubled with such, nor yet with the weaknes or sinnes, which breake forth in the Church: for all ought to know that the Churchs of Christ, are subjeft to faile as no doubt, but wee doe in our best actions, but are these things true which hee speaketh, of smiting & wounding, and casting our deare brethren out at the vwindowes, I hope hee meaneth himselfe specially for one that is so dealt withall: novv for the matter of his casting out, I haue before shewed, and for the manner of his casting out, hovv can hee tearme it, a cast out at the windowes, seeing it vvas done by the free consent of the Church: yea and those vvhom hee now saith witnesse for them, did not only consente, but some of them hastened the elder to cast them forth, and then their owne alliance had not to speake for them: therfore if his cause had bin good against the Church as it is not, yet might hee not so to haue written: for is not the going in or the casting out at the window, oppofit to the going in or casting out at the dor, as wee may see in Iohn 10. 1. and is their any planner manner of proceding then by the free consent of the Church either to receiue in or to cast out: and was not the incestuous person so cast out 1. Cor. 5. 4. yea and so was Mr. S. cast out by this Church, and therfore cast out at the dore, and not at the window. And wheras he saith that vvee haue been bold to vent our wroft, wee could imagine against him vpon all occasion, how is this true that hee saith when as wee let him alone so many yeares, although hee hath don vs great injury, and that in printe as before I haue showed, and much more I could shew, if I were of his disposition. But what shall a man git by such things, but rather deshonner the Lord, and the trueth, and therfore I let many of his clamours alone vnanswere, because I judge it

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Reprofe of sinnes evry day

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## AGAINST CONTENTION.

25

nor wisdome to contend in such vaine contention, being greeued that I  
am occasioned to doe so much as I haue done by him; further hee saith  
ad for your presumptuous determining my Eternall estat, the Lord  
for giue you. Answer, Hee vwould make the reader beleue that wee  
judge him a cast away, and that no repentance shall be giuen to him  
of God: but hovv euilly doth hee deale in this thing, it appeareth thus,  
Mr. S. after hee vvas cast out yet came hee ordinarily euery Lords  
day a great whille and troubled vs very much with heauy contention,  
wher vpon as I to my best remembrance hard a brother lay, that it was  
doubtfull to him whether hee did not sinne against the Holy Ghost in  
that his doings: nowv if the brother had spoken never so absolut, yet  
vvas hee but one man, why doth Mr. S. speake as if it were the gene-  
rall; but this is his manner: vwill I do desir that the Lord vwill giue  
him grace to shovv the contrary by repentance, but what an idle thing  
is this that hee will print such a thing as this: this vvas but a speech  
spoken by one man, and hee shovving his judgment vpon Mr. S. euill  
cariages then present and also before; what may a vvise man thinke of  
this man, how hee straineth other things for his porpose, seeing in this  
hee dealeth so euilly: for to sett downe one mans speech in such tear-  
mes as hee that readeth, may thinke it vvas the generall: and nowv I  
haue answered his Preface, wherin I haue lett alone diuers of his cla-  
mours, and admonisshions, for these reasons followings first his cla-  
mours and admonisshions do return vpon himselfe, his grounds being  
taken avvay, and so hee being answered in the main differences. 2. I  
am vnywilling to followv a man of his disposition in such idle con-  
tentio[n] in clamours and reproches, and in laying open of the infirmities  
of men to the vworld, for I haue learned of Dauid not to tell of such  
things in Gath, nor to publish it in the streets of Ashekelon, lest the  
daughters of the Philistians rejoice: & I could haue rewarded him the  
like, but I spare such things, and I am greeued that by him I was pro-  
uoked to speake that little I haue done, but I could not vwell auoid it:  
let the indifferant Reader judge. 3. If I should go one vvith him in  
such vnprofitable strife, vwho vwould respect to reade it, but to cry the  
truet[h] out in the maine things indifferant, may bee profitable to them  
that haue a loue vnto the truet[h]; and nowv to ansyver to Mr. S. Post-  
script to the brethren absent, in the vwhich hee should haue had more  
elargisement  
but

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care

*Postscript  
in hand*  
care to sett dovvne the trueth of things as they are , seeing hee meant  
to send abroad his vnprofitable writings.

Brethren it may hapely seem strang to you , that the people bear  
complained of, should be so irregular in their proceedings, and so singular  
as to reject the helpe of all , but since they had their reasons , I  
thought it requisite to giue them their due herein , the reason why  
they proceded not by the rulle Matth. 18. vvas because in this cause  
they had nothing to doe with it, but vwith Iosua 22. and 1. Theſſ. 5.  
22. Anſwyr , I lay contrary to him that wee refuse not the helpe of  
any as their is just occation, and therefore wee haue & do ſtill profeffe,  
that if any Church or Christian can ſhow vs vherin wee ſinne in any  
thing, vvee are redy to heare them, but for this point ſee the Anſwer  
to his Preface, vher hee chargeth vs for rejecting of our 38. Article,  
but let the Reader obſerue, hovv hee doeth ſkoffe vwith his ovne  
abusing of vs , firſt obſerue that hee vwould take away ſtrange con-  
ceites out of the mindes of the abſent brethren , by the giuen to vs  
our due in the ſhowing to them our reasons , which reasons hee  
mindes to bee very vnlufficient for the buſines in hand.

Answer , and ſo do I minde alſo as hee ſettes them downe : there-  
fore I vwill obſerue his doings , firſt where hee ſaith the reaſon vwhy  
vvee proceeded not by the rull Matth. 18. vwas because in this caufe  
they had nothing to do vwith it. Anſwer, but is this all that wee haue  
ſayd, haue wee not ſhowed wherin wee had to do alſo vwith Matth.  
18. in this buſines, for that rull hath three degrees, the firſt, the ſecond,  
& the third, & their is no ſin handled in the Church, which is not com-  
prehended in this rull, and this wee hold which is contrary to that that  
hee hath ſett downe, wheras hee ſaith; but with Iosua 22. and 1. Theſſ.  
5. 22. hear wee are greatly abuſed alſo, for althoſh Iosua 22. is ef-  
fectuall for the buſines in hand, as after I ſhall ſhow, yet that in the  
Theſalo. is not of waighte for that hee ſettes it downe, neither vwas it  
to that end brought; thoſe Scriptures was aledged to him in the pu-  
blique when hee refuſed to debat the matter , the one prouing that  
Christians ought to abstaine from all apperances of euill, but ſeeing he  
had run into it, this Scripture being compared vwith Iosua 22. they  
proue that Christians ought to cleare themſelues in ſuch like cauſes as  
that vvas , and as their example reproueth them that vwould not fol-  
low it, ſo likewiſe is the example of the Church of Iſraell an example  
and

## AGAINST CONTENTION.

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and rull for all Churches, to keepe the watch of the Lord, that his publique ordinances should not bee broken also. Wee find the like example in Actes 11. wher Peter submitted himselfe to the brethren at Jerusalem, clearing himselfe and shewed his warrant, that hee vvas sent of God: and now to ratifie to the consciences of all these Scripture alledged, looke in the Phil. 3. 17. which sayeth; Brethren bee followers together of mee: and marke them which walke so as you haue vs for an example. Now the Apostells, I hope, their writings are the commandements of the Lord: Who ought not to bee afraid to practise the contrary: novv I say these Scriptures agree with Matth. 18, concerning all publique matters in the 3. place: therefore when that was spoken by one, that wee had not to doe in this cause with Matth. 18. it was to bee vnderstood concerning priuat sinnes, and of priuate nature: therfore when wee saw how hee peruerterd that parties meaning, then there were other answeres giuen to cleare it, as I haue shewed: if he hath giuen to vs our due in this, let the Brethren judge: and wher hee saith and the reason why they reject all others helpe, was because they sayd they were contrary to all men. Answer, for rejecting of helpe I haue answered before, but lett it bee obserued how euilly hee dealeth hear vwith vs, first hee saith, they sayd and hee knoweth it vvas but one mans speech, and therfore if it hath bin altogether a mise spoken, yet vvas it not the Churches: for hee knoweth that nothing is the Churches, but that which is taken by voice or consent vwith a space of silence: and that is to be reckoned the Churches acte, and hee hath bin told of this oftentimes, and yet both hear, and in other places hee thus abuseth vs, moreouer although the words were not formable, and therfore not proper, yet hee knew his meaning vwhich vvas that all those vwhich he stod to haue to judge of his cause, were contrary to vs in this bussines: But to shew his euill dealing, let it be obserued that hee quoteth the 1. Thess. 2. 15. wher the Apostell saith of the Jevves vwho both killed the Lord Iefus, and their owne Prophetes, and haue persecuted vs away, and God they please not, and are contrary to all men. Now his quoting of this Scripture to his speech, before spoken of, and showing no reason or distinction, should not men vnderstand that that should bee our also; novv obserue first hee taketh hold of on mans speech, and maketh that the Churches. Secondly hee quoteth a Scripture at his ovyn pleasure, and that must bee our also: is this to

gine vs or due, then let the Brethren judge. Hee saith thus, I refet my selfe to the indifferante presente, vvhether I haue not sett downe their offences sparingly. Answer, by the Replie that is givenen now vnto you, let the indifferant reader judge whether you haue not spoken laifeshly and very euill doing wrong vnto your neighbours, & vnto the trueth by cauling a scandall by your vnprofitable writing, and now lett the brethren judge between vs, yea and any indifferant also, and as for vs wee do acknowledge our offences and sinnes are many, for the which the Lord may justly chaitile vs many wayes, and alio it may bee the Lord hath bid Mr. S. to abuse vs vwith his tonge, as hee bad Shimei to curse Dauid, 2. Sam. 16. 11. But as Shimei was not guiltles although Dauid had prouoked the Lord: neither is hee guiltles although vve haue many offences; but how do I see Adam in him posting of his sin, nay I would hee did so much as Adam, for although Adam did say the Woman that thou gauest mee, she gane mee of the tree: yet hee saith this also, and I did eat: wherin hee did acknowledge hee had broken Gods command: If this man did say so much, I should haue hope of him: but what shall I say, I doe desir that hee may do it freely, and that is all the hurt I wifsh him.

Before this former answer vvas finished, this man hath sett out his third engion into the world, in the vvhich hee playeth the rowears part vvhich setteth out other mens coleres, to the end they may the easier surprise the marchants shippes; the penner of this, after letter appeareth to bee Mr. R obinson, who vvas forvvard enought to helpe this man in his corrupt estat, as it appeareth by this letter: yet novv I suppose hee vvirit by his information, but whether hee did or not, if now in the answver therof, their bee that spoken which please not his friends, and those which consented vnto this letter: then let them thanke this buffy man, vvhich set it out to the world; and let them know whosoever they be, that the trueth must bee preferred befor the respect of any, be they few or many.

The Preface to the letter hath this title, an appeale on trueths behalfe, what hee meaneth by trueth hee giueth to vnderstand at the end of his Preface, and referreth the reader to the letter, vwherby I vnderstand these 2. First his refusing to answer, and his factious meeting which hee calleth lawfull, but of these 2. pointes lett the Reader obserue the answver before giuen, and then it vwill appeare that these

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these descarueth no such title , but rather to bee titled a plaeye  
against the trueth.

*Here follow the Preface to the Letter.*

Our opposites after much and long strugling as vvoid creatures  
taken in a snar , perciuing neither freind nor forenner , know  
how to yeld them any relieve, though they creep basely for it : being  
yet set to hold it out trueth fayling them. Answer. Now this man  
beginneth to shew himselfe in his kinde, and obserue, I pray, his diffe-  
rent cariage in the beginning of his least booke before this , and also  
the first hee cometh vwith fare , showes and woud make the vworld  
beleue that that which hee doth is all in loue, and therfore hee calleth  
vs Brethren , although euen then hee did vs great injury , but vwhat  
maketh him to change his tane so quickly : it seemes by his ovne  
wordes the very hearing that wee porpose to make ansyver to his cla-  
mours:and now how doth hee before himselfe, telling to all to whom  
his writing shall come, that trueth faileth vs, and that wee are taken in  
a snare, and that wee can haue no relieve with the rest of his vanting  
words , and all this and more hee doth , before such time as wee haue  
put out any ansyver vnto him : therfore hee is more like vnto a vvoid  
createur, or like vnto a man that is vvilde in condition , which hauing  
heard that his enimy doth porpose to meeete vwith him, presently hee  
drayweth out his sorde, and their with smiteth round about him, and  
crieth out to his enimy that hee can not stand before him : but yet I  
thinke hee shoulde haue stayed himselfe , till one combat had bin tried,  
and not this to haue wanted himselfe. Well I will leaue it to consid-  
eration whether Gaall Judges 9. 29. or hee bee the greatest boasteres,  
and if wee be as hee faith taken in a snare : hee wanteth not will to  
hold vs fast, but I will grant him to be the diuellis snare layare , as be-  
fore I haue shewed, and I also grant : that hee and some with him hath  
in snared and troubled the mindes of some which hath troubled vs, &  
now that hee being a chiefe instrument in this our troubles , or strug-  
ling as he tearmeth it, let him take the shame of it vnto himselfe , and  
let him and all know , that wee are commanded to striue ernestly for  
the faith once giuen to the Saints, Jude 3. and for vs I hope wee shall  
haue cause to say as the Psalm saith , Our soule as a bird is escaped out

of the snare of the fowler, the snar is broken, and wee are escaped, Psalm 124. 7. And for to looke for help at the hands of men, vvee leaue that vnto him which doth so labour for it; and it shall bee sufficient for vs to haue the vword of the Lord for our warrant, to satisfie the conscience of all that feareth the Lord.

And wheras hee saith that wee creep basely for helpe or reliefe, I know no such thing, yet obserue how contrary hee is vnto himselfe, one while hee saith wee reject the helpe of all, and hear hee saith that wee creep basely for relieve, and neither of them are true, as hee would make the Reader to vnderstand, for I haue answered before that wee reject the helpe of none in due order, and as their is just occasion.

And vheras hee saith nowv they vnonconsciennably inuent slanderes hoping after so long time past, they may now boldly change the causes of our differences, and say vvee were cast out for a tempting to lead them to idolatry, and so all wee haue published is no other then lyes, vwhich they nowv threaten to manifest to all the vworld.

#### A N S W E R.

Wee vvill leaue the inuening of slanderes vnto himselfe, vwho hath so laueshly let his tong, and pen run that way as hath bin shewed, neither will vvee change the causes of our differences, and therfore I haue layd jt downe before that they were cast out, for a factious or vnlawfull meeting. 2. For contempt of gouernment in their refusall to answer or to debat their matter, and 3. for contention in the manner of carriages, these were the heades of their causes of their casting out: But now doth hee thinke by this his clamours to stay vs that wee shall not speake, or lay open his sin in the particulars as vvee haue just occasion, vwhich is contained in those generall heads, and seeing hee would not debat his matter before hee vvas cast out, but vwould haue it tourned backe in to priuat: therfore although hee hear of it in the publique, vvee do him no injury, seeing hee administers the occasion, and if vvee should not lay open the particulars to prove the factious, or vnlawfull meeting, hee I suppose vwould take the aduantage therof; therfore let the Reader obserue the answver before giuen, but that any hath so spoken as hee settes it doyvne, I knowv none, yet if there did

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did any so speake, they shot some thing nearer the marke, if the particular bee looked into : And vvhreas hee saith that vvee-euer haue shuned triall to such clamours, I haue answvered before : But wheras hee saith that this letter doth manifest it wher also contrary to our saying is confearmed that they censered vs for not, acknowledgging intraping demandes, for Christ government and a lavyfull peacable meeting for faction. Answer.

Hovv this letter doth manifest this vwhich hee saith, it vvill in the answvering thereof appeare in the meane time; to him I answver, vvee might v wonder how Mr. Rob. can conferm that vwhich hee speaketh of, seeing hee vvas altogether ignorant hovv things were caried, and thenon the other hand considering hovv hee vvas corrupted vvith the same errour, and more errors of like natur, vwhich also receiued him by that Samaritanest Couenant, and also receiued for trueth this mans information, and those that assit him : considering of these things

wee may oblerue what caried away his affection:but for answer,

I give this man to vnderstand that Solomon Prouerbes 18.

17. hath told vs the condition of such as hee is, ther-

fore the greatest and first complainers are not all-

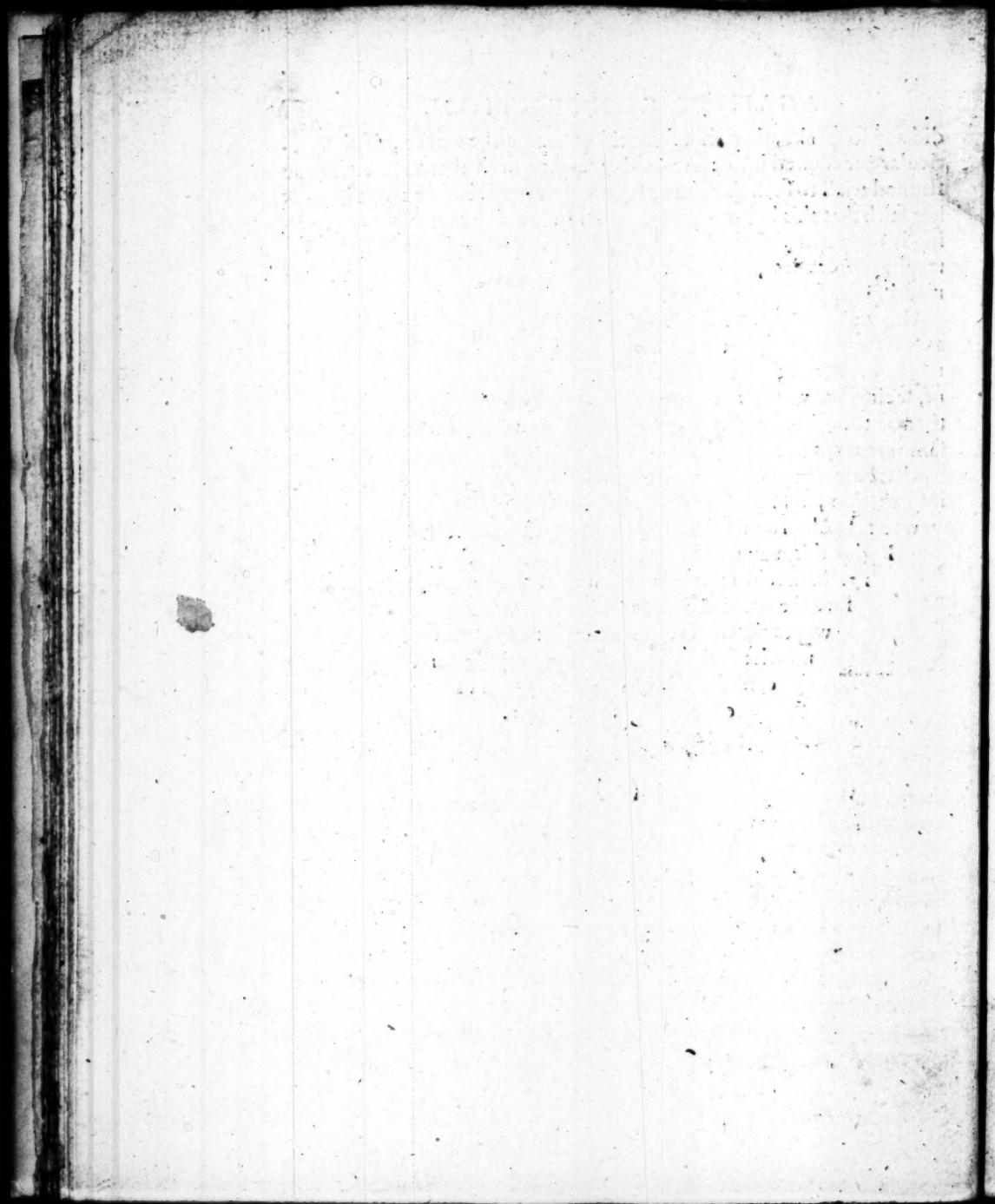
wayes the most clears of euill : and therefore

now let such as know the trueth judge and

confider what is sayd betvveen vs

concerning this matter.

(. . .)



Hear followeth the answering of the Letter  
of the Church of Leyden.

**V**ee receiued your letter Brethren, but not answering either our expectation, or the waightnes of the busines in hand.

A N S W E R.

**H**is waightie busines vvhich hee speaketh, vvas a reconciling of those persons, vvhich vvas cast out for these things in question, and how shold vvee answer their expectation, seeing those opposites were so stiffe in their sinfull course as that speech doth manifest, which one of them spake aluding to Paule Actes 24. 14. in vvhich speech hee vwould seem to imitat Paule, but although it vvas good in Paul to vse that speech, and showed his fearnes in the trueth, yet vvas it euill in Mr. S. to vse that speech in the behalfe of his sinne, and it showed his stifnes in the same, and therefore no hope of reconciliation, they so standing in that minde: And vvheras Mr. Robin. vwould seem to justifie him for his stifnes, saying first touching the person intended by you, I shold not seeme strange to any, if hee were most forvvard vvhoo vwas deeply interested in the busines, and that so far as his Church estat and membership must necessarily stand, or fall vwith that Couenant impugned by you, as the branch vwith the roote.

Answer, I denie that his membership should stand or fall by that Couenant, for wee receiued him to vs one these two grounds, first as a member coming from the Church of Leyden, vvhom wee vvere in communion.

As being a man capable, because hee vwas fully

separated from the false Church, and this hee had manifested vnto vs before wee receiued him: and although the Church of Leyden vwhich held the Covenanter true, did so receiue him by that Covenant, yet wee allwayes rejected that Covenant: and did not receiue him by that Covenant vnto vs, for vhee hauing nowv another ground to go vpon. First that hee vvas a man aboluteiy separated. 2. That hee being nowv a member of a true Church, vwhich vvas in communion vwith vs: and although Mr. S. vvas contrary to himselfe in that hee vvas nowv separated, yet held that Covenant true: yet else how should wee bear vwith him in the differance of his judgment according these Scriptures, Rom. 14. 1. and Phil. 3.14. 15. alwayes prouided that hee keept his errore to himselfe, and not to corrupt others their vwith, and this vwill stand vwith the Scriptures that so vhee receiued him: yet if any can shew vs other vvayes that it will not stand, but that wee ought to haue done more; then there is a remedy by faith and repentance in Christ to helpe all our a misdeings, and not to run vnto such extreme conclusions as Mr. Robin. would driue it, nay yet further I say, that if the Church of Leyden, vwho first receiued him, and that by the vertue of that Covenant, if they had come to see their errore in so doing, yet vwould it not followv that hee should bee defmembered, seeing hee vwas separated: but the Church ought to acknowlede their sinne in so doing, and to see that hee corrupted not other Reu. 2. 20. with his errore: and that reason helpeth him not from Gen. 29.24. where hee saith, As Zilpah vwas not, nor could bee rightfully Leahs handmaide, except shee had bin Labans first rightfully: by whose gift shee was transmitted and conueyed vnto her. Answer, I grant that Laban could not rightfully give her, except shee had bin his rightfully before: but if Laban had stolien her, and Zilpah had run away, and come to Leahs into the land of Canaan, then Leahs might haue bought her, or haue hiered her, and yet Laban should haue no injury offered vnto him, vntesse his stealling her, made her his rightfully, vwhich nee man ought to say. So likewise, neither the Church of Leyden, nor any true Church, ought not to receive any from such an vnsperated people, seeing they haue but stolien the ordinances of God, and haue no right vnto them.

And whereas hee bringeth these reasons to proue his deepe intent

in

in the busynes, let all know, that noconceited iatreft vwill beare out  
any to maintaine an error : and therefore all his reasonings is of  
little weight. And for that hee saith that the Couenant vvas by the  
Churches both here and there, also in the time of those vworthy go-  
uernors, now at rest in the Lord esteemed truely Christian, I pray let  
vs examine the truthe of this, that the Churches both here and there  
did so esteeme : for our selues I may say that the Church never did  
receiue it, and therefore not so esteeme it : neither vvas the voice  
of the Church euer taken concerning that Couenant, but vwhen they  
showed their minde to bee contrary vnto it, and condemned it: Or  
doth Mr. Robin. thinke that because our teacher, who was a mis-  
informed, did a little whille esteeme of the Couenant; that there-  
fore the Church must so esteeme also, and thought that wee must doe  
as these which consented to this letter, which followed vnsuffered  
him in all, or the most of his declinings : And for that Church which  
is present in the place vwhere those Couenantmaker are, as wee are  
truely informed by themselues, they did never receiue it. How is  
this true then vwhich Mr. Robin. sayd : but if it had bin so, what  
vweight is there in that reason, to helpe the Couenant, much like  
vnto the reason of the Pharises Iohn 7.48. which layd against Christ,  
doth any of the Rulers or the Pharises beleue in him, but this peo-  
ple vwhich know not the law, are cursed. Therefore I conclud, it  
is not the esteeme of Churches, nor of gouernors which giueth au-  
thority to such things, but the word of the Lord: and where hee  
saith the party intended by you, should by your grounds not haue  
bin cast out, but left out of the Church.

Answer, Our grounds inforce not that conclusion, seeing the per-  
son vvas nowv become a separated person, and a member of the  
Church of Leyden, from whence wee received him, as before I  
haue shewed, in the next place there is a syd and a halfe of the prin-  
ted letter spent to excues, and to justify Mr. S. in that speech, in  
the vwhich hee seemed to imitat Paule Actes 24. 14. but of that I  
haue spoken before, yet still I answer, that those his speechs did  
proue bis styness in that his former course, and therefore of reconcil-  
iation wee had no hope while hee so stod and continued, and for Mr.  
Robinson profering to come and to justify Mr. S. in that his former  
proceding: to the which I answer, wee know well that hee vvas

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redy to that busines, and that hee was one vwith him in that his entour, and therefore just cause wee had not to bee redy to giue him entertainment to come as a moderator to middle the matter, seeing wee find no such president in the booke of God, yet this wee hold and professe, that if any can shew that vvee haue sinned in any thing, vvee ought and are redy to heare them, and this haue vvee signified vnto the Church of Leyden by letter, and therefore the way vvas open for them to come in that manner. In the next place hee saith: And wheras the course well begone and tending to pacification, was as wee vnderstand interrupted and broken of vpon a ground taken from the course of not calling againe into question ciuill judgments, once passed by the judge according to right; let it not bee greiuious vnto you, if wee a little warne you of that dangerous foundation vpon which it seemes you to much build your manner of proceedings in the Church.

Answer. To hould that matters being ended according to right, ought not at mens pleasures to bee called into question againe, I see not this proued to bee dangerous, by all that which Mr. Rob. haue sayd: For if matters rightfully ended, shold at mens pleasurs bee called into question, vwhen vwould their bee an end of contention, either in the Church or in the common wealthes: and for the distinction which hee putteth between the ending of ciuill judgments, & of the casting forth of the sinner by the Church: namly that repentance should follow to these distinctions. Wee agree and signifie withall, that if wee could see that good worke in these persons in question, there vwould bee quickly are conciliation, but yet further I ansver, to take away occasion from such as take an occasion to cauill at things equall, that wee hold it lawfull although a matter bee rightly ended: yet vvee may go ouer it againe, as the occasion may bee offered, yea and more then once: and this wee haue practised in this matter in the publique with these men diuers times: but yet it vwill not follow, that at mens pleasurs wee must do this, and bring our liberty into bondage, and so to vphold contention.

But wher hee saith that a larger extent of discretion this vway fevv causes in any age can persuad to: then this in hand, confidering both the ground and cariage of the thing, and the number of the persons opposite, and vwith these intrest of all other Church in the busines.

Answer.

Answer. The comparison of any age is more fit to shew eloquence, and to set a glose vpon the thing in hand, rather then to proue that for vwhich it is brought, and for the ground and cariage of the thing, I haue before spoken of it, to the which I refere the Reader; and for the number of the persons opposite, I answer, although I am sorry they are so many, yet I am glad they are so few, seeing these men are such futille opposers & labour so much to corrupt the mindes of the simple: and hauing with them Iob the captaine, and Abiather the Preist, I meane Mr. Robinson and his people to establish them in their straying, and wee hauing bin to backeward to withstand them in these their doings. These things considered, it is the Lords mercy that wee are preserued, but if these opposers were many more then they bee: it is no argument of weight to cause vs to yelde to any vndirect course, whereby the trueth should bee betrayed, but obserue, I pray you, that one, if not more then one of those persons whom Mr. Robin. would at ayme haue respected; yet a little before hee calleth a light person, and I will not striue with him about it, seeing his or their change was like the Barbarians, Act. 28. 6. and for the intrest of all other Churches in the bussines. I answer, I knowv no proper intrest that any Church had in this bussines, for the which they were cast out, but our owne in which they were members, for vnto vs it did appertaine to looke vnto their faction, in the vwhich faction they indeuoured to corrupte our members vwith that their errour, and hath not every Church a particular right to vwatch ouer their owne members: therefore I conclude, that this is but a glose to deceiue the minde of them that readeth it. And vheras hee telleth that satisfaction for the manner of the cariage hath bin tender by the parties censured: Answer, Wee should haue bin glad, if they did tender repentance for the matters themselves, and had they not bin up-holden by these men in these their errours, it may bee before now, long they might haue repented of the matters also: for they were as stiffe at the first, when they vvere cast out for the manner as the matters.

And where Mr. Robinson saith, that in a matter of meere counsaile and aduise, more then which neither the Church of London required, nor you could afford them, any particular person aduised with, and hauing their reasons of differances from the Church persuasion, may and in causes of weight such as this was ought by speech

or vwriting as their is occasion signifie, that their different judgment and aduise to them whom it concernes prouided the same bee done in good manner, and with due respect to the Church.

Answer, The trueth ought to bee respected, and also the Church which maintained the trueth, but neither of these was so respected as they ought, as before bin shewed, by those men in that their doings: Moreouer I could except against this, that it was not properly counsail, or aduise in this point in question, vwhich that Church desired, but to let this passe. I ansyver, might not any heriticke haue such pretences to broch their errours by such smouth groundes or termes, as these bee vnder the pretence of counsaile or aduise: what if the Church of Smyrna, Reu.2. 8. being solisited by a seducer to receiue the doctrine of Balaam, and shoulde therefore send to the Church at Pergamos, Reu. 2. 12. for their counsaile to know whether they ought to receiue it or reject it, if then the Church of Pergamos did giue them counsayle not to receiue it, and that by the word of God: might those others vwhich vvere corrupted vwith that error in that Church, gather themselues apart from the Church, and send their counsaile to receiue that error, and so oppose the trueth and the Church in their proceedings? M. Robin. saith yea in smouth tearmes. But I say no: because that if the (vers. 14.) Church of Pergamos and Thyatira Reu. 2.20. were blamed for suffering them before to teach and deceiue the Lords people, then their sinne would bee more, to lett them go on to corrupte the Lords people, although they shoulde plead with Mr. Rob. smouth termes of counsaile or aduise: and therefore the Scripture out of Prou. 11. 14. is by him abused: neither is their any liberty taken away from any, seeing none hath liberty to broach errour: and herein was the Church to vse authority, and also to show reason vwhich vvee haue done and vwhen wee did it, although it was at the request of the Church to vvhom vvee vrit: then this man toke an occasion thereat to make all this trouble. Further hee saith, That seeing both Moyles in the Law Deut. 19. 15. and Christ in the Gosspell Matth. 18. 15. 16. 17. ordains, that euery matter shoulde bee established by two or three witnessses.

Answer. There were more then two vvitnesse vwhich knew the facte vwhich they had done from their one mouth, besides some that were their: but what need is here not to presse for vvitnesse, vwhen them-

themselues allwayes confessed the fact > only here is the difference, they thinke it was well doing : and so Mr. Robison saith also, but wee say and knowv it to bee euill : why then do they not lay this contention a syd and stand to maintaine their cause to make it good or to acknowledge their euill : and for these Scriptures by him alledged wee acknowledge the force of them , that no man which denieth a fact , can bee condemned vnder two witnesses , but what of this , I hope they should also acknowledge, that if there bee no witnesse, yet if a man do freely confesse a fact worthy of death, that then that man should dye, and yet those Scriptures not in the least broken : for Dauid which put the Amalakit to death, knew these Scriptures alledged , and also hee knew that hee broke them not ; because his owne mouth was as sufficient as many vvitnesse. Now if no more vvere sayd , it were sufficient to gainsay that vwhich Mr. Robin. saith, that wee do herein against Moles and Christ , and the Law of the nature it selfe, where bee bringeth Actes 24.8.13. Yet further I answer, Mr. Robin. faileth in his ground , for hee taketh it for granted from Mr. S. information, that vvee went vpon suspected euills, and this Mr. S. runeth vpon also bringing our 8. position as before is shewed : seeing then they mise in the ground , all falleth at once : and now you may see how well the Church of Leyden hath made good their charge, and which Mr. S. boasted of before : And therefore Mr. Rob. clamours of that large liberty which hee speaketh of , and saith hee can main-taine will here fall to the ground. But vvhile hee saith : And novv brethren , vwhat shall wee say more vnto you , our and all other Churches aduise you , reject in confidence of your owne vnerring judgment , and proceeding in this matter. Answer , For vs wee con-fesse that wee are subiect to erre , yet ought wee not therefore to for-sake any part of the trueth for tanting words , which Mr. Robison herein vleth to reproch vs withall , and also maketh a shew of that which is not wherein hee dealeth like Mr. S. vwith vvhom hee is a brother in euill : But vwhat and where are those other Churches hee speaketh of , hee should therefore haue keept himselfe to his ovne Church vwhich had consented to this euill Letter , vwhich hee hath written , but if hee could shovv other Churches , vwhich did so ad-uise vs , were it not a vworthy argument to conuince vs . Therefore I say to the Law , and to the testimonies of the Lord , if they can bee brought

brought to ouersway our reasons, I trust the Lord will giue vs hearts to submit therevnto, and vwhere hee vvisheth that vvee did see our weaknes, and faith then would you not procede vwith that confidence, in a matter and manner before ynheard of in the Churches.

Answer: How true this is, it doth appeare by the answer to Mr. S. Preface before: for their I haue layd downe the matter and approued our course by the word of God, and haue the examples of the Churches of God in the like causes, which by the vword of the Lord is approued: and for our weaknes wee knovv it, and confesse it, yet ought wee not willfully to cast away our obedience from the least of Gods preceptes, or commandes, which hee hath giuen vs to walke in, vpon Mr. Rob. suttle inticements, yet wee are redy to hear what any man can informe vs, by the word of the Lord: and therefore that sentence hee might haue spared, wher hee saith, As if the word of God either came from you, or vnto you alone, and who can not abuse Scripture phrases to effect their willes. Lastly. hee endeth his Letter vwith vprebrading of vs, which is as, I suppose, a principall cause that Mr. S. hath set it out to the vworld, because it agreeth vwith his manner of reproaching of vs, as followeth: And for the Church here vwhich is neareliest vntited vnto you, vwhat other vse haue you had of vs since the death of your vvise and modest gouernors in all your differences and troubles? saue to helpe to bear part of the scandall & opprobry, wherewith specially in the publique cariage of matters, you haue layden the ordinances of God and professors of the same in the eyes of all within and vwithout: but in vaine vye speake vnto you, vwhose eares prejudgete hath stopped.

Ansver, In deed neareliest in dwelling, but fardist of in affection as it may appeare, not only by this bitter Letter, but also to strangers, as occasionally they passe by their dwellings, by vvhom it cometh to our eares, how bitterly they inuay against vs; and what is the cause, because wee wil not receiue their new found vwayes of declining, and because wee deslike that they looke not better to the Lords vwatch in suffering their members to apostat: some declining to the Church of England, & their liuing, other going a great compase to new England to communicat with the Church of England: and some of them that are in this Land professe to hear in the assemblies, as they haue occasion; and I make no doubt, but they haue don it many times: and this their

their negligent watch hath effected so, that from a great company they are allmost come to nothing or fewer then those vvhom they despis, and haue sayd concerning vs, that our contentions would break vs to peeces.

And further I say that our troubles haue by them bin increased in vnojust, taking part vwith our opposites; so that the prouerbe is in them fullfilled which saith, Prou. 27. 17. Yron sharpeneth yron: so doth man sharpen the face of his friend; for Mr. S. informeth Mr. Rob. and his people a mise, and they againe sharpen his face, and harden him in his euill, and others that take his part: and so increase our trouble and also the scandal, and herin they fullfill this prouerbe: Prou. 28.4. They that forsake the law, praise the vvicked: and therfore lett it not bee though contention, althoough wee faile in the manner of the doing of it: if wee keepe and obserue the other part of the Prouerbe vwhich saith; But they that keepe the lavy sett themselues against them. And nowv my brethren that are absent, I speake to all that are faithfull, if all the Churches of God, Gala. 1.7. Phili. 3. 18. 2. Peter 2. 1. or the most of them haue bin thus troubled as the Scrip-  
tur doeth plentyfully shovv, vwhy should it seeme strang vnto you, as if some strang thing had befallen vs, or as if it yyere other vvayes vwith vs then it hath bin vwith the Churches of God, euen in the dayes of the Apostel's and in all ages, yea and hath not the Apostells Act. 20. 30. foretold that such things must bee, saying, For their must bee heresies amongst you, that they vwhich are approued may bee made manifest amongst you: 1. Cor. 11.19. If therfore vvhee striue for the trueth, and to abolish sinne, vve e do herin the will of God: There-  
fore our Lord teacheth vs to judge with consideration Iohn 7. 24. say-  
ing, Judge not according to the ppparence, but judge righteous judg-  
ment. Neither let any stomele or bee offended at any weaknesses they  
see, or espie in vs, for wee are but vveake men compased about vwith  
the same infirmities euen as other, yet desiring to bee helped by any;  
let therfore such as haue a loue vnto the trueth, rather sett their shoul-  
der to the Lords vvorke, and helpe to bear the burden, Gala. 6. 2.  
which the Lord hath appointed: and let all know that as it is euill to  
giue justly an offence for any to stomele, so is it dangerous to bee of-  
fended in Christ, as our Lord saith, Matth. 11. 6. And blessed is hee  
that shall not bee offended in mee. And vvhether Mr. Rob. saith that our  
cares

cares are stope vwith prejudice. Answer, It hath bin time for him to say this, if hee had conuinced vs of error or sinne, but to run on thus vpon an vnjust ground, may rather bee judged prejudice in him.

And wheras hee saith, that they will bewaile our state, which is indeed to bee bevvailed: to this I answer, Althoough hee doth mise the right mark in this his bewayling of vs, for hee bevvayleth vs because wee withstand his error and declining, yet for our selues I say vvee haue cause to bee sory, or to bewayle our sinnes and vweakness, and also our troubles which our opposites hath made: and the more sory vvee are that hee and his people hath vnjustly helped them as this Letter doeth manifest, and vwhich I haue noted before, yet more I say bevvayle or weepe not for vs only, but for themselues in respect of those euills and declinings before shewed: and thus I end vwith the Letter of the Church of Leyden, desiering all to consider of that vwhich is vwritten, in the which their is no eloquence, for I want learning and am but a bab in Christ: yet I pray consider that when a child, pleadeth reason, it ought the more to bee regarded, because it proceed from so simple an vnderstanding: so looke vpon the cause to bee the more just and equale, because I am but weake, and haue not been hertofore so employed. And now as Elihu saith Iobe 34.

3. The ear crieth words as the mouth casteth meats; therefore try the reasons and Scriptures alledged, and as Paule saith 2. Timo. 2. 7. Consider what I say and the Lord giue thee vnderstanding in all things.

F I N.

Concerning the publique passages of things in the Church which are in this booke, I haue beene carefull to keepe to the trueth of things, yet it may bee in some vword or vwordes vwhich is not materiall, to change any sence may haue escaped, therefore for the more certainty of the trueth thereof, I did first reuise them with diuers brethren: and then I read it in the publique, first because all shoulde take knowledge of the rightstanding of the cause indifferant: secondly because I would not allvvayes stiue about words and things which concerneth not the things indifferant: and so to fill the vworld full of needlesse contention, vwhich is neither to Gods glory, nor yet to the comfort of him that doeth it.

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*Fault escaped.*

In page 2. line 8. seeing is wanting. p.4. l.4. read vs for his. p.4. l. 21. a mise for inse. pag.5. l.2. read sinne for sence. p.5. l. 9. read were for was. p.5.lin.23. read appealing for appearing. p.5.l.30. read said for sayth. p.8.l. 37.read proued for proue. p.11. l.2. read circumcision for circoncision. p.11.l.23. read second for two. p.12. l.11. read the for to. p.13.l.6. read prouoke for prouoque. p.13. l. 12. read scerching for cerching. p.15.l.17. our is vwanting. p. 25. l.33. read try for cry.